Study of problems of taxes on highways

†1229. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to constitute a Committee for studying the problem of different types of taxes to be levied in respect of National Highways and for suggesting the measures to solve these problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) At present, there is no proposal to constitute a Committee for studying the problem of different types of taxes to be levied in respect of National Highways and for suggesting the measures to solve these problems.

Sanction to Sethusamudram Canal Project

1230. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's decision to sanction the Sethusamudram Canal project is based on the Environmental Impact Report done by NEERI;

(b) whether it is a fact that the report has very little primary data relevant to this project and lacks in-depth assessment of microbiological character and oxygen depletion during dredging of the canal which has bearing on the marine life and the livelihood of fishermen; and

(c) whether the Central Government would constitute an Expert Committee to assess the environmental impact of the project afresh?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The Government have approved the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project based on Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted by the Tuticorin Port Trust, the nodal agency designated for the project, after receiving environmental clearance by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. While granting environmental clearance, Ministry of Environment and Forests took into account the detailed environmental impact assessment studies for the project carried out by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.